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(How to Succeed) Without Really Trying

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ADVANCE WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON—The Central Intelligence Agency, which has no publicity office and usually confines its comment to "no comment," seems to be succeeding without really trying.

In a poll of 500 Washington correspondents, the CIA has finished in a tie for third place with the White House and the State Department as the government agency most helpful to them.

The winner was the Justice Department, with the Federal Power Commission second. Trailing CIA, the White House and State were the Agriculture, Interior and Defense Departments and 18 other agencies nominated.

The poll, conducted by American University, drew 130 replies, a response the poll's director, Jack C. Seigle, calls "fantastically high." Justice got 23 1/2 votes, compared to

14 1/2 for the FCC and 11 each for CIA, the White House and State.

Seigle says it is "quite evident some news men were putting us on." But at the CIA, the response was pleasure and bafflement.

A call to the agency — it's number is in the phone book — produced this dialogue:

"Is this public information?"

"This is Commander Moran's office."

"Is he the public information officer?"

"Well, he sometimes handles that sort of thing. CIA really has no public information office."

"Commander Moran? Have you heard CIA finished in a tie for third with the White House and State Department as the most helpful agency to news men?"

"No, I didn't. This is news to me."

"Are you pleased?"

"I don't know whether I am

not. I am, personally, because we're in such a difficult position. I don't know the reason for it. . . Most of the time all we can say is 'no comment.'"

"What kind of information are you able to give? Can you say how many people work at CIA, for instance?"

"This we're unable to comment on."

"Well, does CIA turn out any press releases, or do you conduct press tours or anything like that?"

"This we're unable to comment on."

"OK, Commander, thank you."

"Just a minute. Do you mind telling me where you got this information? When did you get it? And your name?"